

THE EVIDENCE OF RESTORATIONS IN THE SANCTUARY MOSAICS OF THE CHURCH OF THE DORMITION AT NICAIA

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IN a footnote to his paper prepared for the Eleventh International Congress for Byzantine Studies, held in Munich in 1958, Professor Kitzinger suggested the possibility that originally, under Hyakinthos the Founder, the conch of the apse of the Church of the Dormition at Nicaea was adorned with a standing figure of the Virgin, that this figure was later replaced by a cross which, in turn, was removed when Naukratios restored the *status quo ante* by reintroducing a figure of the Virgin to its former position.¹ In other words, it is suggested that in the history of the conch mosaics there were at least three stages—not two as has been universally assumed. With regard to the four angels in the arch of the bema, which some have re-

¹ E. Kitzinger, "Byzantine Art in the Period between Justinian and Iconoclasm," *Berichte zum XI. Internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongress*, IV, 1 (Munich, 1958) pp. 1–50. Cf. pp. 12–16 for a review of the question of the mosaics in the apse and bema, and especially note 59 for the proposed sequence of mosaics in the apse. For a more extensive bibliography and the positions taken by previous writers on the subject, the reader is referred also to the article of Géza de Francovich, "I mosaici del bema della chiesa della Dormizione di Nicea," in *Scritti di storia dell'arte in onore di Lionello Venturi* (Rome, 1956), pp. 3–27. Heretofore the mosaics of the apse (fig. 3) have been regarded (except by Kitzinger) as the work of two phases (one original, the other representing alterations). The dates ascribed to the two, and even the extent of mosaic surface representing each phase (cf. note 7 *infra*), have varied greatly. The first phase has been considered by some to have been pre-iconoclastic (VI–VII c.), by others iconoclastic; the second phase has been associated either with the Orthodox interlude (787–815), or with the period after 843. On the other hand, the mosaics in the arch of the bema (*Etimasia* and angels, but usually excluding the inscription between two of the angels, fig. 7) have been regarded as being of one epoch which has been ascribed to one or the other of the two phases recognized in the apse.

garded as examples of pre-iconoclastic art,² Professor Kitzinger was more cautious, but questioned whether the heads, at least, were not also restored.³

The most reliable evidence for settling these questions consists of N. K. Kluge's original photographs, taken in 1912,⁴ and their reproductions in the publications of Schmit⁵ and Lazarev.⁶ While the quality of this material leaves much to be desired, I believe that Schmit's plate XX and two of Kluge's photographs (our figs. 3 and 4) present clear evidence in support of Professor Kitzinger's suggestion regarding the mosaics of the conch. In my opinion, however, he did not go far enough in questioning only parts of the angels, for here the evidence of Schmit's plates XIII and XIV (our figs. 7 and 9) is that the angels were restored from head to

² This, despite the inscription of Naukratios between the angels in the south side of the arch (*infra*) which clearly refers to his restoration of the holy images.

³ *Loc. cit.*, pp. 14–16, especially note 55, where it is pointed out that the normal trimming of gold around the tops of some of the haloes is lacking, and other evidences of disturbance in the mosaics exist.

⁴ I am greatly indebted to Dr. Alice Bank of the Byzantine Department of the Hermitage, Leningrad, for prints of Kluge's negatives used here in figures 3, 4, and 5.

⁵ Theodor Schmit, *Die Koimesis-Kirche von Nikaia* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1927), from which our figures 6–9 are taken. One could wish for more detailed comments by Schmit or Kluge on the condition of the mosaics. The total destruction of the church in the Greco-Turkish war in 1912 leaves us with the photographs and the published plates as the most useful record of the mosaics.

⁶ Victor Lazarev, *History of Byzantine Painting* (in Russian), 2 vols. (Moscow, 1947). Lazarev used prints of Kluge's negatives in his publication. The pertinent illustrations appear on plates I, II, and VI of vol. 1, and figs. 6–8, and 38 of vol. 2.

foot. It will be the purpose of these notes to determine as precisely as possible what can be learned of the history of these mosaics from a scrutiny of the photographic reproductions. For this purpose the plates were photographically enlarged, thus making it possible with the added magnification of binocular loupes to trace in many places the exact path of the seams, or lines of juncture, between areas of mosaic of different periods and to observe more clearly certain areas of disturbance in the mosaic surface where alterations occurred. Where junctures resulting from insertions into pre-existing areas were clumsily executed they are obvious, but in a number of places they appear to have been skilfully done and are either impossible to trace with exactness or remain entirely invisible in the reproductions. However, in the few instances where it is not possible to follow the complete contours of restored areas the distribution of clearly detectable seams informs us of their approximate course, or suggests definite conclusions as to the areas of replacement. The following demonstration will require constant comparison of figures 3, 7, and 9 with the drawings (figs. 1 and 2) and the outlining of areas of restoration in the arch of the bema (figs. 6 and 8).

If one examines the photograph of the mosaics in the apse (fig. 3), it is apparent that, with the exceptions of the cross-shaped area containing the figure of the Virgin and the small area of the hand of God in the arc of heaven at the top, the remaining vast expanse of mosaic surface in the apse is original mosaic which we can call period I (fig. 2). With those exceptions, the mosaics of the conch are homogeneous and have all the features of having been done *de novo* in one continuous campaign. The rows of tesserae carry through in a consistently systematic way and the arc of heaven, the rays, footstool, zones of ground, and individual letters in the inscriptions are consistently trimmed by rows of gold tesserae to form a neat transition between the horizontally laid gold cubes of the background and the sharply defined edges of the objects made of different colors. Moreover, these mosaics are "signed" by Hyakinthos, the founder, whose monogram appears at each end of the principal inscription on the narrow

semi-circular facing between the apse and the arch of the bema.

These characteristics of original work carry through the ornamental borders and the inscription into the mosaics in the upper part of the bema arch. The entire mosaic surface illustrated in Schmit's plate XII, which includes the great medallion of the *Etimasia* at the top of the arch and the banners borne by the angels, is certainly a continuation of work done in the campaign that produced the original apse mosaics and presents the same consistency in its system of construction. A few cracks run through the *Etimasia* the full width of the arch, but these are not man-made. They result from structural breaks in the crown of the arch itself. In the arch it is only when we reach the areas between the inscriptions above the angels and the tops of their haloes that these conditions change and we detect irregularities that will be discussed below.

In the apse it is clear, therefore, that the seams surrounding the figure of the Virgin indicate removal of mosaics from period I and the substitution of others which are necessarily later.⁷ It is perfectly obvious that at one time the central feature of the composition in the conch consisted of a monumental cross (figs. 1, 2, and 3). The seams that surround the terminations of the lateral arms of the cross are very conspicuous and represent the edges of an area of mosaic that had been cut out. Indeed, within these areas, in their outer two thirds, one can still see the ghostly outlines of the terminations of the cross itself which precisely determine its contours, including the pointed serifs at the corners of the arms. The seams surrounding the tops, bottoms, and outer ends of these two areas (marked II in fig. 2) have com-

⁷ Wulff's last opinion, summarized in his *Bibliographisch-Kritischer Nachtrag zu Altchristliche und byzantinische Kunst* (Potsdam, 1937), p. 72, that only the small fragments of the cross, the ornamental framework, the hand of God, and the monograms of Hyakinthos represent the remains of the original campaign is entirely unrealistic and on the face of it must be rejected. Such a view would mean that the post-Iconoclasts, intent upon replacing the cross by a figure of the Virgin, removed vast areas of mosaic, but spared extremely small areas of the object which they set out to remove.

monly been interpreted as cuttings made when the cross was removed in preparation for the insertion of the figure of the Virgin. This has led to the conclusion that the original decoration of the conch consisted of a monumental cross. On the contrary, it can be shown that those particular seams represent the boundaries of areas that had been cut out of the gold background of the original mosaics (period I) in preparation for the insertion of the cross.⁸ Those who have viewed these seams as the traces left after removal of the cross have overlooked, or have failed to account for, two things: first, the fact that traces of the cross still existed, and second, the very prominent seams, at each side of the Virgin, that ran more or less vertically between the areas marked II and III in figure 2. If the mosaicists who executed area III (the Virgin) were the ones who cut out the areas marked II the mosaic surface would have been continuous and unbroken from one end of the cross arm to the other and there would have been no reason for seams across these areas, separating them from the figure of the Virgin. The seams between areas II and III can be accounted for only through their having been made as a result of the still later insertion of the mosaics of area III (the figure of the Virgin) within the area of the cross (period II). The areas marked II, therefore, are in large part the very tesserae that were put in place in period II and the seams above, below, and at the outside of these areas represent the boundaries of areas removed from the original mosaic background in preparation for the insertion of the cross. These two areas, therefore, represent what was left after the central part of the extensive area of period II, containing a cross (fig. 1), had been destroyed for the purpose of inserting the figure of the Virgin (period III).

In his description of the areas marked II in our drawing (fig. 2) Schmit touches on the

⁸ In Hagia Sophia at Salonika, where the cross was original, but was replaced by the Madonna, its removal did not produce seams around the ends of the arms (see fig. 10). Had it not been original, seams would have defined the areas cut out for its insertion, just as they do at Nicaea. See *infra*, p. 238, for comments on the method used at Salonika, as well as at Nicaea, in obliterating the traces of the cross.

first of these two points, but merely states that the remnants of the cross itself were outlined with cubes of dark gold.⁹ This explains the relative indistinctness of the outline of the cross in his photograph (our fig. 3), for the contrast is only slight between the darker gold of the outline and the lighter gold of the background surrounding it within the seams, and of the fill within the outline. It is quite unlikely that the cross, when it was made, should have been outlined only in gold, even a gold of darker hue than its surrounding gold ground, for it would have remained very inconspicuous. Other comparable examples of monumental crosses set into gold grounds are outlined in tesserae of black (St. Irene, Constantinople, fig. 11), or red (Hagia Sophia, Constantinople). Two alternatives present themselves: either the cross was indeed originally outlined in dark gold (in which case the entire surfaces of the areas marked II, including the outlines of the cross, were left intact when the figure of the Virgin was inserted), or, as seems more likely, the mosaicists who substituted the Virgin for the cross merely picked out the individual tesserae that formed the outline of the cross and carefully replaced them with gold.¹⁰ It is perhaps significant that the gold in the narrow strip of background that accompanies the figure of the Virgin seems also to have been of a darker hue and very similar in color value to

⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 34: "Innerhalb dieser horizontalen Arme des von der Risslinie umschriebenen Kreuzes sieht man Bruchstücke einer Kreuzfigur, welche durch Würfel dunklen Goldes gebildet wird."

¹⁰ It is the author's opinion, based on observation of the mosaics at Hagia Sophia in Constantinople which had been removed and replaced, that the normal method of removing large areas of mosaic was to cut through the thickness of the three coats of plaster, a thickness of about 5 cm., to the masonry and then to build up with new plaster to the original thickness. However, at Hagia Sophia an inscription was discovered in which the black glass tesserae had been individually picked out of their plaster setting, and tesserae of stone (matching the stones immediately surrounding them in the background) had been substituted in an effort to remove evidence of the inscription. In small areas or lines of cubes, such as the letters of an inscription or the outlining of the cross at Nicaea, this more meticulous method could be used, but not in an area of any appreciable extent.

the gold in the outline of the cross. This could be regarded as an indication that the mosaicists who executed the figure of the Virgin (period III) had no gold that matched the hue of the gold backgrounds of periods I and II and that in all probability they replaced the original outline of the cross (of black or red or some such color) with the darker gold cubes observed by Schmit. Good precedent for this method of removing the outline of a cross exists in the apse mosaic in the church of Hagia Sophia at Salonika where the cross, which seems to have been the original decoration of the conch (iconoclastic period?), was replaced by a post-iconoclastic figure of an enthroned Madonna. Photographs made prior to restorations of more recent years (fig. 10)¹¹ clearly show that only the borders and seriphs surrounding the arms of the cross were lifted out and replaced by gold tesserae, leaving intact most of the field within the borders and the gold background surrounding them. In all probability this is the method that was used also at Nicaea, but however that might be, the case for the cross as a second stage in the history of the conch mosaic does not depend on either of these alternatives and remains unaffected.

Having concluded from an examination of the areas containing the terminations of the horizontal arms of the cross that there were at least three stages in this mosaic's history, and that the cross was an insertion into the original mosaics of period I, we find evidence leading to similar conclusions when we consider the seams that surround the nimbus of the Virgin. By comparing figures 2, 3 and 4 (specifically, the area of gold ground immediately to the left of the halo), one can see that at each side of the halo there are two seams. The inner one closely surrounds the nimbus down to points close to the juncture of the halo with the shoulders. Its course is very ragged and extends upward into the central one of three rays. Near the shoulders this seam turns sharply to run outward in straight horizontal lines at each side that are only faintly distinguishable because they coincide with horizontal rows of the earlier gold background. At the outer ends of these lines they

form right angles again where they join the more or less vertical seams that carry downward the full length of the figure to the top of the front edge of the footstool. This continuous and rather symmetrical seam surrounding the figure and nimbus of the Virgin outlines area III (fig. 2), and within it the entire surface of mosaic is of one piece and must represent the work of the last epoch, marked period III. Returning to the area of the head, it is clear that there is a second pair of seams at each side of the halo, outside the first. These complete the boundaries that surround two small areas of gold background (represented by stippling in figure 2) which do not belong to periods I or III. Further, it should be noted that the rows of tesserae in these two areas diverge in direction from the rows of period I at each side, just as the rows diverge in the two areas of the arms of the cross. The two small areas marked by stippling in figure 2 are the only parts that remained from the gold background inserted in period II around the upper part of the cross. The two outermost seams of these small areas mark the lateral extent of the cut that was made in this part of the conch for the purpose of inserting the cross. The width between them is far greater than was necessary to accommodate the upper arm of the cross (see fig. 1), a fact which strongly suggests that a nimbus in the mosaics of period I pre-existed the cross in this area, and that its removal accounts for the great width of original mosaic that was destroyed there.

On the basis of the preceding conclusions the form of the cross of period II can be reconstructed with a fair degree of certainty, and the extent of the mosaic surface of period I that was removed for the insertion of the cross can be determined in some places and conjectured in others. Figure 1 represents the cross surrounded by the seams made by the mosaicists who inserted the cross. However, only the seams drawn in solid lines around the ends of the horizontal arms and the two short lines at each side of the nimbus are fixed with absolute certainty. The broken lines indicate the conjectured extensions of the seams of period II. Except for the line above the top of the cross, the conjectured outlines of the seams are drawn to coincide with the seams made by the mosaicists of

¹¹ Such as Boissonnas, negative no. 1783-B, a detailed enlargement of which is used in our figure 10.

period III who would most likely have chosen to remove the mosaics up to the lines cut into the mosaics by their predecessors of period II. In any case, if one allows for the figure of an earlier Virgin, the seams at the sides cannot have been much closer together in period II than those represented in the drawing. In placing the cross upon the dais, or footstool, a conjectural three-stepped base was provided in the reconstruction patterned after that which supports the cross of the iconoclastic period in the church of Saint Irene in Constantinople (fig. 11).

From this reconstruction three points become apparent which again indicate that the cross was not part of the original decoration of period I. The first is that the lateral arms of the cross were made to parallel the rows of tesserae in the background. These rows are actually horizontal, or very nearly so, but when seen from the usual point of view (from below) they appear to curve upward because of the curved surface of the conch. The arms of the cross, therefore, do not appear to be straight horizontal lines, but curve upward in a most unsatisfactory manner when seen from any point of view below their level. In the two instances of Hagia Sophia at Salonika (fig. 10) and Saint Irene in Constantinople (fig. 11), where the crosses were original to the mosaic decoration, the lateral arms give, as nearly as is possible, the impression of straight lines when seen from below and consequently do not parallel the rows of cubes in the background, but actually curve downward.¹² In other words, adjustments were made in the relation between the cross arms and the rows of tesserae of the background in order to provide for optical correction. This is the natural

thing for a mosaicist to do if he is executing a cross *de novo* in such a place. At Nicaea, where the cross was set into a pre-existing gold ground and was executed in a narrow and rather restricted area of insertion, such adjustments could not easily have been made, and in fact were not made, thus indicating again its make-shift character. Had the cross been made as the original element in the conch it would have been laid out so as to appear horizontal from below and executed before the background. The horizontal rows of the background would thus adjust themselves to the cross.

The second point that becomes apparent in the reconstruction is the fact that the Nicaea cross appears to have been unique among examples of monumental crosses in that it is placed upon a footstool. Footstools of this sort appear in Byzantine art only when great personages (such as emperors) or the divine persons—Christ or the Mother of God—stand upon them or have their thrones set upon them. It is a royal attribute which, to my knowledge, was never employed in conjunction with a representation of the cross. At Salonika, if the gap in the inscription at the base of the conch were filled in with the letters that were destroyed when the Virgin on her throne was substituted for the cross, there would have been no space available below the cross for a footstool comparable to the one at Nicaea. At Saint Irene (fig. 11) no footstool of any kind was used and the cross rests solely upon a small three-stepped base. This evidence alone strongly suggests that the footstool and the cross at Nicaea could not have been contemporary, as we have seen from other evidence. The original treatment of period I must have consisted of a figure of the Virgin standing upon the footstool.

The third point is provided by the inscription surrounding the arc of heaven at the summit of the vault. This inscription is definitely original to the mosaics of period I and should, therefore, be appropriate to the iconography of the original decoration of the apse. Its source, though not its exact wording, is part of verse 3 of Psalm 109 (110) which reads, in literal translation: "I begot thee from the womb of the morning." The sense of the inscription cannot be regarded as a

¹² The photograph of Figure 11 was taken from the floor. Although the vast scale of the mosaic does not permit one to trace the individual rows of cubes in the background, a comparison of the upper edge of the green zone at the bottom (which appears curved although it is actually horizontal) with the outlines of the horizontal arms of the cross (which appear straight although they are actually curved) illustrates the point. An elevation drawing such as the cross-section on pl. 5 of W. S. George, *The Church of Saint Eirene at Constantinople* (Oxford, n. d.), or his perspective view taken from a point well above the floor (*ibid.*, pl. 17), shows that in actuality the lateral arms are curved and the rows of tesserae of the background are horizontal.

reference to the Cross,¹³ but is perfectly compatible with a representation of the Virgin and with her role in the Incarnation.

The evidence of the photographs of this mosaic thus firmly establishes the following conclusions. First, that the original mosaic decorations provided by the founder, Hyakinthos (period I), presented the standing figure of the Virgin upon a jeweled footstool. These mosaics were surely pre-iconoclastic both because of the subsequent history of the mosaic and because, as Gregoire has shown, Hyakinthos was known as founder of the church at the time of the VII Oecumenical Council, which met in Nicaea in 787, and must have flourished well before that date.¹⁴ The presence of the Virgin in the apse mosaics of period I prevents their being regarded as works of the periods of Iconoclasm. Secondly, we can conclude that this figure was removed by the Iconoclasts who replaced it with the image of the cross (period II). Finally, the cross, in turn, was removed after Orthodoxy was re-established and an image of the Virgin was reinstated in the apse.

It was said above that the mosaics in the upper part of the arch of the bema (Etimasia and banners) were made during the same campaign of fabrication as the original parts of the apse mosaics, that is, period I which was pre-iconoclastic. In the two sides of this arch, to the south and north, there are two pairs of angels (figs. 7 and 9). Each angel is inscribed and carries a labarum with the *trisagion*. The angels stand in a rather wide horizontal zone of green which extends to the lower ornamental border immediately above the cornice. At the bottoms of these zones, and extending the full width of the arch beneath the feet of the angels, there are inscriptions. There are no evidences of seams of any kind immediately around or above the inscribed epithets above the heads of the angels, or around or above the inscribed banners which they carry. The two inscriptions beneath their feet, excepting the

obviously later losses and patches of painted plaster at the left in the northern side (fig. 9), show no signs of disturbance beneath them nor, for the most part, immediately above them. As Wulff and Schmit have remarked,¹⁵ all the inscriptions thus far named are epigraphically exactly like the inscription surrounding the arc of heaven at the top of the conch and like that on the narrow facing of the conch which, as we have seen, belong to period I. A careful comparison, especially of the *alphas*, *epsilons*, *sigmas*, and *kappas*, shows that they are all of the same campaign of fabrication, i.e., of period I. When we examine the inscription that runs vertically between the two angels in the southern side (fig. 7) we find, however, that the style of the letters is quite different and that they are made of blue glass as opposed to black in the other inscriptions.¹⁶ The *alphas* no longer have the pendant cross bar, the *epsilons* and *sigmas* have become more rounded and less angular, and in the *kappas* the vertical stroke is detached from the rest of the letter, etc. As has been commonly acknowledged, this inscription records, in its implications, the restoration of the mosaics by one Naukratios, which makes the inscription later than those of Hyakinthos the founder, and later, therefore, than period I. Those who have attributed the angels to period I have assumed that the inscription was a later insertion, but this can be questioned, as Professor Kitzinger has done,¹⁷ on the grounds that unless restorations had been carried out in the arch of the bema, and specifically in the areas of the angels where his inscription was placed, Naukratios would hardly have recorded his work there. Moreover, since it is certain that the Iconoclasts did remove the forbidden image in the conch, it seems very unlikely that the angels would have been spared. On these grounds alone it appears quite clear that in part or in whole the angels are the Iconodules' replacements of earlier ones. This conclusion is confirmed, and the extent of the alterations is made evident, by a close examination of the areas immediately surrounding the angels (compare figs. 7 and 9 with figs. 6 and 8).

With regard to the areas immediately

¹³ In reviewing Schmit's publication, Wulff (in *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, 52 [1931], p. 7) was troubled by the lack of relation between the inscription and the cross.

¹⁴ H. Grégoire, "Encore le monastère d'Hyacinthe a Nicée," *Byzantion* V (1929-1930), pp. 287-293.

¹⁵ Wulff, *op. cit.*, p. 76; Schmit, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

¹⁶ Schmit, *op. cit.*, pp. 23, 29, 33.

¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 14 and note 53.

surrounding Naukratios' inscription, Schmit, who recognized that it is later than the others and thought it to have been inserted, was unable, in substantiation of his opinion, to do more than to remark that the outline of the wing of *Dynamis* (fig. 7) follows a course which he thought was not original.¹⁸ An examination of the photograph, however, shows no traces of seams at either side of the inscription and the wings appear quite clearly to have been properly trimmed with single rows of gold and to have remained undisturbed. Indeed, if one examines the area between the tops of the wings and the top of the green zone, and laterally through the bodies of the angels, no seams in the mosaics are evident, only certain areas of loss and later patches of crudely painted plaster. However, in each side of the arch a nearly continuous line of disturbance and seams runs almost horizontally at a level a little below the tops of the haloes and turns upward in curves at each halo to clear their borders (see figs. 6 and 8). This is most plainly evident in the northern side beginning to the right of *Exousie* (fig. 8) where an all-but-straight horizontal seam runs from the inner edge of the ornamental border to a point just short of the right side of the halo. Judging from Schmit's plate XIX (or Lazarev's fig. 7, vol. II), once the *reprise* reaches the border of the halo, just to the right of the top center, it appears to follow a very neatly executed joint between the outer edge of the halo's border and the original gold trim of period I for a very short distance to the left. At a point near the large patch between the two haloes, it departs from the contour of the halo, but owing to the patch we cannot pick up the seam again until we come to the top of the left wing of *Kyriotites*. For that reason this part of the conjectured path is indicated in broken lines in figure 8. A short distance to the left of the shaft of the labarum of this angel the seam again clearly reappears and runs horizontally toward the left to the right side of the nimbus. Here it breaks upward to follow a very ragged path around the top of the halo. A part of its course can be seen in figure 5, where it can also be observed that around the top of the halo there is no gold trim; this begins only at the left below the seam where the restorer was able to provide

¹⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 23.

it. From the left side of the halo the seam runs in a straight line into the large patch of plaster at the far left.

If one compares the gold background in the areas above and below this long line of seams and disturbances, one can see that, whereas the rows of tesserae above the line are relatively straight and continuous, their directions below the line diverge excessively from the horizontal—more than would be expected in a newly made mosaic in similarly constricted and irregularly shaped areas such as those between the haloes and the wings. This evidence indicates that in all probability a continuous seam, such as is indicated by the black lines in our figure 8, runs the entire width of the arch from border to border. The right-hand border was still preserved at the time of the restorations, and in examining its inner edge where it is joined to the gold of the background, slight irregularities in the juncture below the level of the horizontal seam become apparent. This can be seen by comparing the very neat line between border and background in the mosaics above the horizontal seam with the more irregular ones below that point. A straight and continuous line between such contrasting colors as those of the background and the border offers a logical place for the restorer to make a seam with the minimum of evident disturbance.

Since the mosaics above the horizontal seam at the level of the haloes are work of period I, while those below the seam are of another period, and since the inscription in the lower part of the green zone is also of period I, it follows that a second horizontal seam must exist between these levels. In the northern side (fig. 9), where it is more clearly evident than in the southern, this second seam follows a somewhat jagged line between, and at each side of, the angels along the upper edge of the green zone. (Contrast the rough lines of juncture between green ground and gold background in the arch—figs. 7 and 9—with the neat and undisturbed juncture in the apse—fig. 3). The two angels, perhaps significantly, have lost their lower extremities and two rectangular patches exist beneath them which extend into the green zone. One can only conjecture that the general course of the seam in these areas corresponds to the broken line in figure 8. Were these areas lost

because the inserted mosaics did not adhere well around their edges where they lacked homogeneity with their surrounding mosaics?

In the southern side of the arch (fig. 7) seams can here and there be identified in positions that correspond closely to those we have traced in the northern side, although in general the restoration in the southern side was more expertly executed. These seams are indicated by the heavy black lines drawn into the photographs as illustrated in figure 6. By comparing their course in both figures 6 and 7, it can be seen that around the top of the halo of *Arche* there is no continuous gold trimming parallel to the rim of the halo and that the juncture here with the gold of the background is consequently rough. However, below the points at each side where the seams break away from the nimbus, the gold trimming, which is homogeneous with the nimbus and the figure of the angel, is carried down to the juncture of the halo and the shoulders. A similar situation exists above the halo of *Dynamis* where the seam is both jagged and clearly evident. Below the angels, again, a seam is evident along the top edge of the green zone between the two figures. It is perhaps significant that the tri-lobed termination of the staff held by *Dynamis*, within the area of the green zone (period I), does not join onto the end of the staff in the area above (the restored area). The tri-lobed ornament is of a different period from the staff to which it should have been attached. The remainder of the seam, at the two extremities and below

the figures, is highly conjectural. But, as was said above, the clearly detectable portions of the seams in both pieces of mosaic can and do indicate, by their direction and distribution, the approximate course of their complete circuit of the angels, and very definitely establish that the angels, in their entirety, had been removed and were later replaced.

To a great extent, therefore, the angels shared in the history of the mosaics of the apse. Their predecessors were certainly the work of the founder Hyakinthos, and like the Virgin of period I were removed by the Iconoclasts. The angels, at least, were restored by Naukratios for whom no documentation appears to exist. In the light of the similar history of the mosaics in the apse and those in the bema, attempts to date the Virgin and the angels from two different periods should be reconsidered. Leaving aside questions of style,¹⁹ about which much has been written without serious regard to the evidence of restoration, and taking a realistic view of what would be possible in the environment of the iconoclastic controversies, the most logical conclusion would be that the figure of the Virgin in the apse and the four angels in the bema belong to the same period; all of them restorations of Naukratios, and in all probability of a period soon after 843.

¹⁹ In my opinion there are considerable variations in style among the four angels (which, however, must be regarded as contemporary works), some of which do not appear incompatible with the style of the Virgin in the apse-

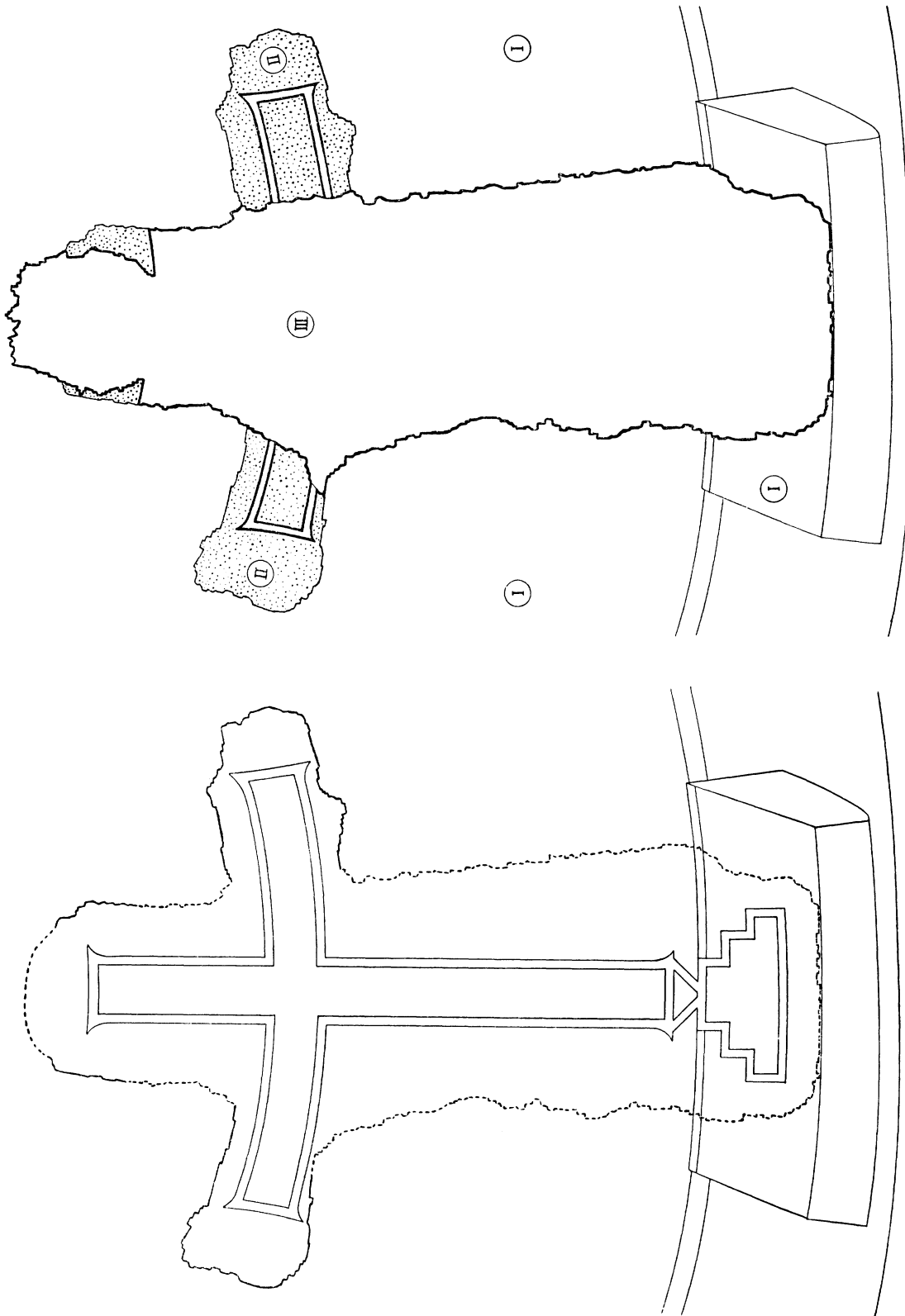


Fig. 1. Reconstruction of Period II

Nicaea, Church of the Dormition. The Mosaic of the Apse

Fig. 2. Areas of Restoration



3. The Mosaic of the Apse



4. The Mosaic of the Apse, detail. Head of the Virgin



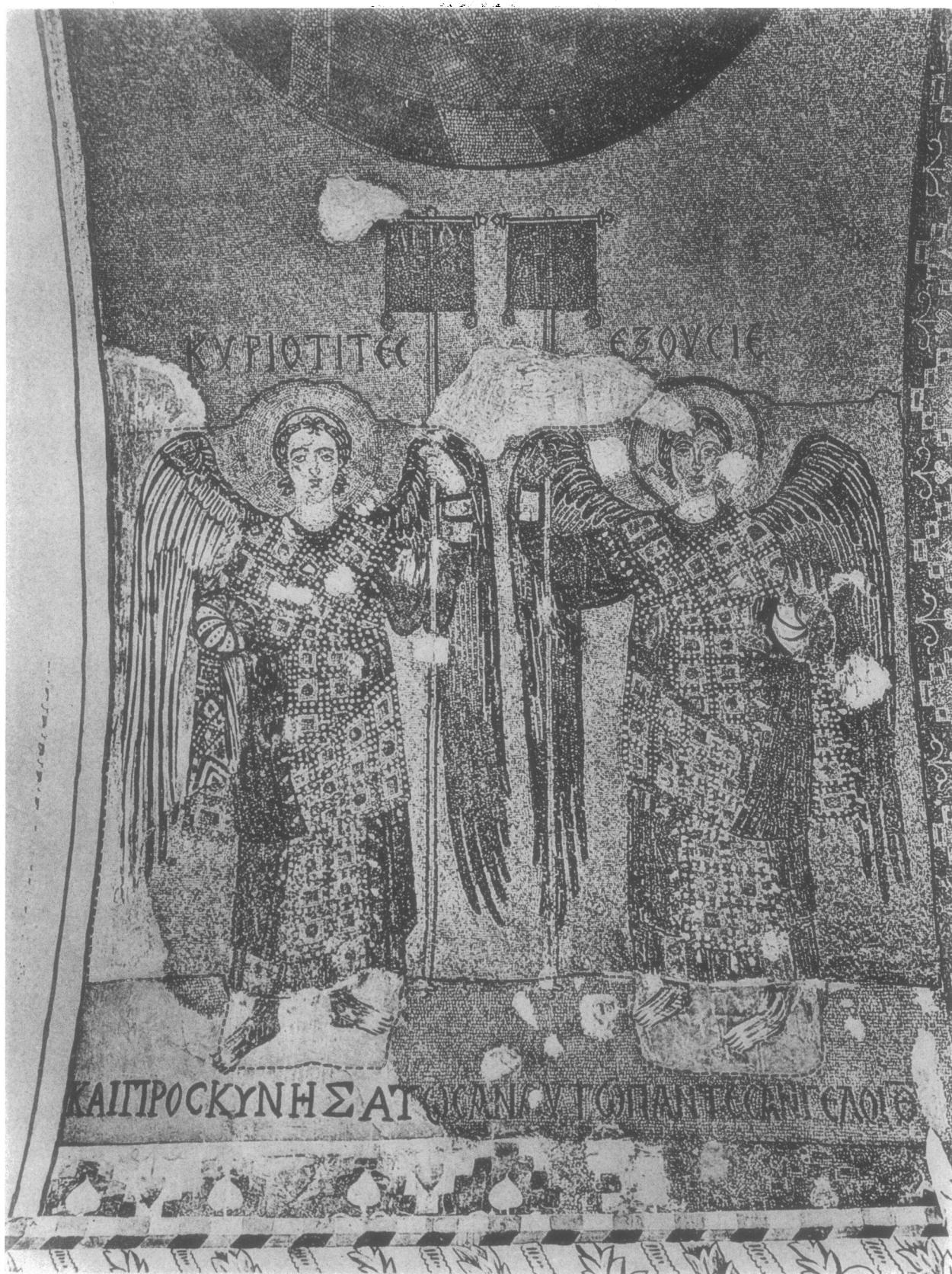
5. The Mosaics of the Bema, North Side, detail. Head of the Angel "Kyriotites"



6. The Mosaics of the Bema, South Side. Area of restoration



7. The Mosaics of the Bema, South Side



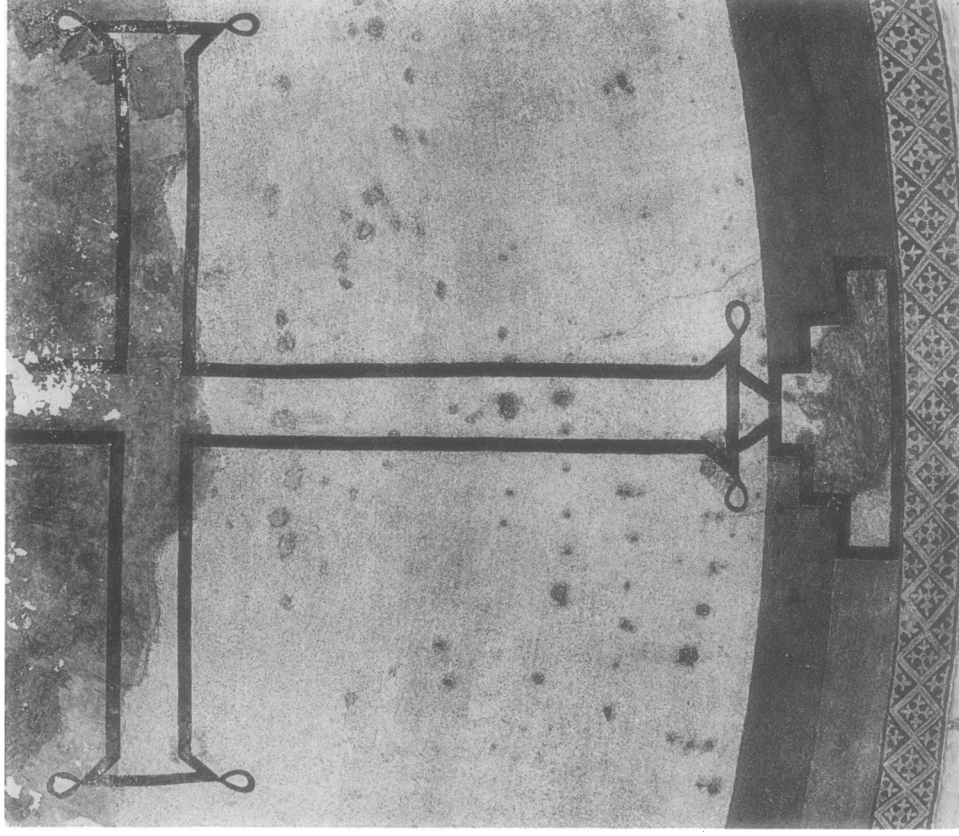
8. The Mosaics of the Bema, North Side. Area of restoration



9. The Mosaics of the Bema, North Side



10. Salonika, Hagia Sophia, Mosaic of the Apse



11. Istanbul, Saint Irene, Mosaic of the Apse